

WO-440
Comfort Powell House
Germantown
Private

c. 1870

Germantown residents point to the Comfort Powell house, a story-and-a-half, one-room plan dwelling, as one of the oldest structures to remain standing in their community. Estimated to date to around 1870, the weatherboard frame house is finished inside with lath and plaster and plain mid-to-late nineteenth century woodwork. A corner stair, enclosed behind a board door, is located on the north side of the interior end brick chimney.

Chain of title research for this village lot traces the ownership back to Comfort Powell, who resided in this house between the 1880s and her death around 1917. The land, described as part of "Credwell" and "Venture," was sold to Comfort Powell by Andrew J. Powell for the sum of \$45. A clause in the 1889 deed mentions that the property is the place "whereon Comfort Powell now resides." The house stands next to New Bethel M. E. Church, one of the oldest congregations of African-American Methodists in Worcester County.

HISTORIC CONTENT INFORMATION

Resource Name: COMFORT POWELL HOUSE

MHT Inventory Number: WO-440

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA:

- 1) Historic Period Theme(s): ARCHITECTURE
- 2) Geographic Orientation: EASTERN SHORE
- 3) Chronological/Developmental Period(s):
AGRICULTURAL-INDUSTRIAL TRANSITION
1815-1870
- 4) Resource Type(s):
House/Single-family dwelling

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. WO-440

Magi No.

DOE ___yes ___no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic COMFORT POWELL HOUSE

and/or common Elizabeth Gray House

2. Location

street & number Germantown Road ___ not for publication

city, town Germantown ___ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Worcester

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
___ district	___ public	___ occupied	___ agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	___ commercial
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational
___ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	___ entertainment
___ object	___ in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	___ government
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	___ no	___ military
			___ museum
			___ park
			___ private residence
			___ religious
			___ scientific
			___ transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Storage

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Raymond Hall

street & number Germantown Road telephone no.:

city, town Berlin state and zip code MD 21811

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Worcester County Clerk of Court liber FWH 256

street & number Worcester County Courthouse folio 276

city, town Snow Hill state MD 21863

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. W0-440

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☒ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Historically known as the Comfort Powell house, this story-and-a-half frame dwelling stands on the north side of Germantown Road in the community of Germantown, Worcester County, Maryland. The house faces south with the gable roof oriented on an east/west axis.

Estimated to date to around 1870, the one-room plan frame house is supported on a minimal brick foundation, and the structure is sheathed with plain weatherboards. The steeply pitched gable roof is covered with tin over wood shingles.

The south (main) facade is a two-bay elevation with a centrally positioned entrance filled with a partially glazed front door and an adjacent six-over-six sash window. A boxed cornice finishes the base of the gable roof.

Rising through the west gable end is an interior brick chimney with a single flue stack piercing the roofline. The top of the chimney stack is stuccoed. The gable end is flush and finished with a plain bargeboard. A small window opening flanks the chimney stack to light the second floor space.

The north (rear) wall of the house is covered by a delapidated shed roof section, which shelters the board-and-batten rear door and a six-over-six sash window.

Inside the one-room house, the walls are finished with lath and plaster. Sawn lath is fastened with cut nails. Fixed against the west wall is a plain mid-to-late nineteenth century mantel. An enclosed winder stair rises in the northwest corner of the room.

8. Significance

Survey No. WO-440

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. WO-440

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian

organization Private Consultant

date 2/9/93

street & number P. O. Box 5

telephone 410-651-1094

city or town Westover

state MD 21871

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
571-7100

WO-440
COMFORT POWELL HOUSE
Germantown
Chain of title

FWH 256/276

Raymond C. White
Avalon M. White

to

6/13/1969

Randolph Hall
Cliffe Mae Hall

K.J.C. 29/28

Last will and testament of Eliza E. Powell

to

Died 8/4/1968

Raymond C. White
Avalon C. White

O.D.C. 30/372

William E. Powell, "colored"

to

3/18/1918

Eliza E. Powell, wife

O.D.C. 30/371

William G. Kerbin, trustee

to

2/12/1918

William E. Powell

1 acre, Germantown \$ 145.00

property which Comfort Powell died siezed
Circuit Court 12/26/1917 Maria Elizabeth
Gray complainant and Emma Burbage et al
defendants, Chancery #2839

WO-440
COMFORT POWELL HOUSE
Germantown
Chain of title continued

Page 2

J.W.S. 3/222

Andrew J. Powell
Alice E. Powell

to

3/8/1889

Comfort Powell, colored
\$45 whereon Comfort Powell now resides
"Credwell" and "Venture"

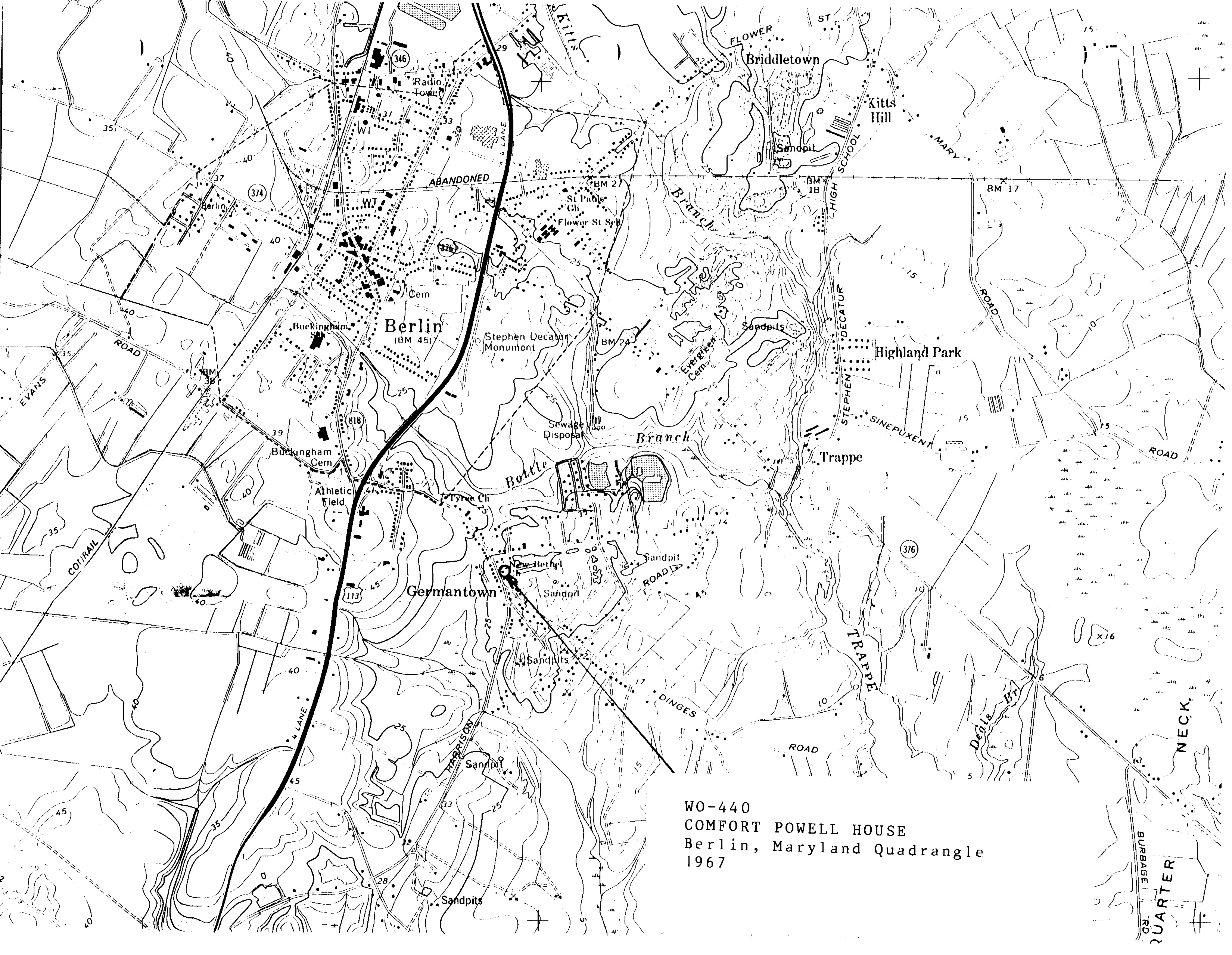
TT/560

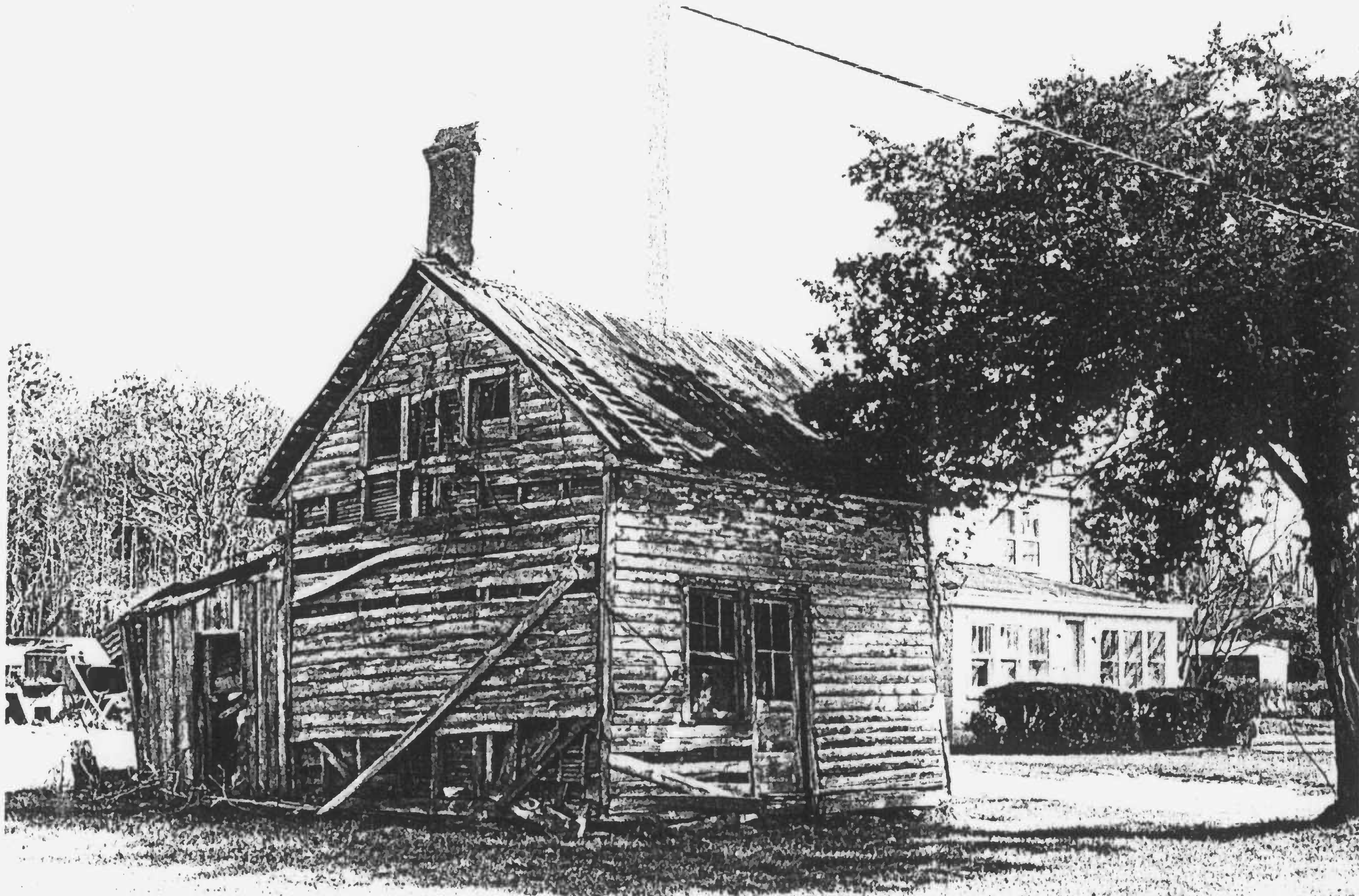
Last will and testament of John Powell

to

Proved
5/23/1871

Andrew J. Powell





NO-440
COMFORT POWER HOUSE
GERMANTOWN, WORCESTER CO., MD.
SOUTHWEST ELEVATION
2/93, PAUL TOWART, PHOTOGRAPHER
NEG (MD. HISTORICAL TRUST)